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## CRAWFORD HOWELL TOY

DAVID G. LYON

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

“The earliest trace of the Toy family is found in England in the person of Robert Toy, bookseller in Saint Paul’s Churchyard in 1640. Members of the family came to America about 1720, and settled first in New Jersey and then in Baltimore, whence Professor Toy’s grandfather moved to Virginia about the beginning of this century” [19<sup>th</sup>]. This grandfather died in 1814 leaving an infant son, Thomas Dallam Toy, 1814–1879.

Thomas Dallam’s childhood was spent with his mother at Ferry’s Point. At the age of fourteen his school days closed, and he was apprenticed to a druggist in Norfolk. But this was not the end of his intellectual growth. His evenings were devoted to study, and he became a man of unusual attainments and high standing in the community. He had special talent for languages, and was able to act as interpreter when foreign ships came into port. He even began the study of Hebrew, and cultivated the taste for good reading in his family. He was a member of the firm of King & Toy, wholesale and retail druggists of Norfolk. The firm did an extensive business before the Civil War, and was subsequently carried on under the name of Thomas D. Toy & Sons.

Mr. Toy was one of the constituent members of the Freemason Street Baptist Church of Norfolk, founded in 1848, its first treasurer, first Sunday School superintendent, a member of the first group of deacons, and leader of the choir. When the church edifice was built he gave liberally of his means and time, and in order to reduce the costs he cut with his own hands all the glass for the windows. He had a wide and accurate knowledge of the Scriptures, and it was his custom to read from the Bible with his family at breakfast and at supper. At noon he spent an hour in prayer and meditation. Such was the father of Crawford Howell Toy.<sup>1</sup>

Crawford's mother, Amelia Ann Rogers, was the granddaughter of a Revolutionary officer, named Stanhope. The Stanhope family are said to have settled in Virginia about the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Crawford Howell Toy, the first of nine children, four sons and five daughters, was born at Norfolk on the 23d of March, 1836, and died in Cambridge, Mass., on the 12th of May, 1919. He came, as we have seen, of excellent stock, was inheritor of the best traditions in regard to learning, enjoyed rare opportunities for education, and was endowed with the ability and the will to make the most of these. Like his father, he was slight of figure, but not frail, as appears from his fondness for mountain climbing and from his power to endure long and arduous study.

Crawford received his elementary training at the Norfolk Academy, which at the time was organized on the military basis. He was captain of one of the companies. On his graduation he received from the school a copy of the works of Shakespeare "for excellence." In 1852, at the age of sixteen, he entered the University of Virginia,

<sup>1</sup> For the foregoing details I am indebted mainly to *The University of Virginia, its History, Influence, etc.*, II, 50, N. Y., 1904, and to the *History of the Freemason Street Baptist Church, Norfolk, Va.*, by Ella M. Thomas, Norfolk, 1917.

the most illustrious of educational institutions in the South. Among his teachers were such eminent men as Gessner Harrison, J. Lawrence Smith, and William B. Rogers. Besides the ordinary subjects attractive to students Mr. Toy took a course in constitutional and international law, and devoted some attention to the study of medicine. His attainments in music, which was one of his lifelong interests, led to his selection as leader of a student choir.

Graduating from the university with the degree A.M. in 1856, Toy spent the next three years in teaching English in the Albemarle Female Institute, which had recently been established at Charlottesville. It may seem strange that he did not at once proceed to special study for his professional career. He may have been in doubt what to choose, he was so young, and had so many aptitudes and interests. In 1859 was founded another school which was to have most important relations to young Toy's future. This was the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, at Greenville, South Carolina, now one of the greatest of American schools. It was the first fully equipped divinity school among southern Baptists, and was intended to provide not only for men of college training, but also for those who in the South enter the ministry in large numbers without such training. One of the requirements of all teachers is a declaration of doctrine embracing the essential tenets of the faith.

The founder and president of the Seminary was James P. Boyce (1827-1888). The most eminent scholar in the new faculty was John Albert Broadus (1827-1895), who was settled at Charlottesville during all of Toy's residence there, first as pastor of the Baptist church (1851-55) and assistant professor of Latin and Greek in the university (1851-53), then chaplain to the university (1855-57), and finally pastor again (1857-59). When Dr. Broadus was considering a call to the new institution at Greenville,

Toy was one of the signers of a protest against his acceptance, the ground being that another man might be found to supply the place at Greenville, whereas no other could fill his important position as pastor at Charlottesville. A yet stronger illustration is seen in the words of another correspondent,<sup>2</sup> who wrote to Dr. Broadus that it would be better to choose as theological professors men "who cannot hold out in preaching." "To take valuable ministers," he continues, "from prominent positions to teach twenty or thirty young men to become preachers, many of whom are made worse by it, and none benefited, . . . is too great a sacrifice. . . . Then here is a female institute, which in my humble opinion will do more good than all the theological schools in the United States."

Toy certainly did not share this extreme view, for he was one of the twenty-six students in attendance at the opening session, of whom ten were from his native state. He completed in one year about three-fourths of the entire three years' course of study. A letter from Professor Broadus, dated March 28, 1860, mentions Brother Toy's purpose to go to Japan (as missionary), and adds, "Toy is among the foremost scholars I have ever known of his years, and an uncommonly conscientious and devoted man."<sup>3</sup> He was then just twenty-four. The decision to become a missionary may have been reached during this year at Greenville, for the Seminary has from its beginning always devoted great attention to fostering the missionary spirit. One day in each month is set apart for the meetings of the Society of Missionary Inquiry, and on this day no other exercises are held.

At Charlottesville in June, 1860, Toy and three of his friends were ordained to the ministry. The "charge"

<sup>2</sup> A. T. Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, Philadelphia, 1901. P. 148.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* P. 173.

to the young men was delivered by Professor Broadus. The first half of 1860–61 he spent at home, probably engaged in study preparatory to his missionary work. During the second half he was professor of Greek at Richmond College. On December 17, 1860, J. William Jones in a letter to Dr. Broadus says that the Board have decided not to send out any missionaries for the present, and adds: "Toy talks of going out anyway and taking the chances."<sup>4</sup> The outbreak of war in 1861 interfered with the plan of becoming a missionary.

That Toy should have a part in the war was under all the circumstances inevitable. In October, 1861, he entered the Confederate service with the Norfolk Light Artillery Blues. He declined the request that he should stand for election to a captaincy, and he served first as private in artillery and later as chaplain in infantry in General Lee's army. The strenuousness of the service could not dampen the ardor of the student. There is a tradition that spare moments were given to the Arabic language. In March, 1863, a friend wrote of him: "I saw Toy ten days ago. He is chaplain in the 53d Georgia regiment . . . . Is looking very well and seems to be enjoying himself. His Syriac books are in Norfolk and he has, therefore, been compelled to fall back on German for amusement."<sup>5</sup>

On July 4th, 1863, he was captured at Gettysburg. The conditions at Fort McHenry, where he was imprisoned, were rigorous in the extreme. The tedium of this confinement was relieved by the glee club, the daily mock dress parade with tin pans for drums, and the class in Italian, organized and taught by him. In December he was exchanged, joined the army again, and remained in service till the middle of 1864, when, quite without expectation on his part, he was appointed professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of Alabama, at the time a military training-school of the Confederacy.

<sup>4</sup> Robertson, *Life*. P. 180.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* P. 197.

Here he remained teaching applied mathematics till the close of the war in 1865. In the Federal cavalry raid which burned the University buildings all of his books were destroyed.

In 1865-66 he was again with his Alma Mater teaching Greek, with the title "licentiate." Two years were then spent in Berlin, where he studied theology with Dörner, Sanskrit with Weber, and Semitic with Roediger and Dieterici. Among his anecdotes from the Berlin period is one about the professor who said of the royal family, "Die Allerhöchsten sind in die Kirche gegangen, um den Höchsten anzubeten."

In January, 1869, Toy was chosen professor of Greek in Furman University at Greenville, South Carolina, and in the following May he was elected professor of Old Testament Interpretation and Oriental Languages in the Seminary where he had been a student ten years before. This position he held for ten years, two of them at Louisville, Kentucky, whither the Seminary was removed in 1877. After two years the words "Oriental Languages" were dropped from the name of the professorship, which was thus restored to its original form. During his connection with the Seminary Professor Toy was known to his colleagues, the student body, and wider circles as the most learned member of the faculty, and indeed as a man of extraordinary learning.

My acquaintance with Dr. Toy dates from the autumn of 1876, when I became a student at the Seminary, though I had been familiar with the report of his omnivorous reading and prodigious knowledge. I soon learned that the report was no exaggeration. In the class room he seemed to know everything about the subjects which he taught. He criticized the text-book with freedom, and sought not to fill the mind of the students with facts, though he never minimized the value of fact, but to stir up the mind to the exercise of its own powers.

In his course on the English Bible many a student heard views expressed which were both novel and disturbing; as when the lecturer told him that the word "day" in the first chapter of Genesis means a day of twenty-four hours, whereas we know that the world was not made in six such days but is the result of ages of evolution; or when he said that the author of the book of Daniel was not a contemporary of Nebuchadnezzar but lived in the second century B.C. These commonplaces in the teaching of today were startling to many minds in the South four decades ago. Dr. Toy never demanded that his views on any subject should be accepted without question. With transparent fairness he gave the arguments pro and con on any disputed question that came up, and stated his own preference or conviction, but preferred that the student in the presence of all the facts should form his own judgment. And it was ever his method to set the student at work gathering facts for himself, and thus acquiring at first hand the materials for reaching conclusions. While his opinions were based on careful study and were firmly held, no man was ever more ready to revise them in the light of additional knowledge. Needless to say, he exercised a profound influence on the thinking of his students.

While every utterance of Dr. Toy regarding the Scriptures was reverent and considerate, his classes became aware of a difference between him and his colleagues, and as time went on he found it increasingly difficult not to give expression to his most mature thought on Biblical questions. This leads to one of the most important episodes in his life, which is entitled to be presented with some fulness.

When Dr. Toy began his teaching in the Seminary his orthodoxy seems to have been above all ground of suspicion. The subject of his inaugural lecture in 1869 was "The Claims of Biblical Interpretation on Baptists."



Baptists, he says, must "cling close to the word of God as our sole guide. . . . A fundamental principle of our hermeneutics must be that the Bible, its real assertions being known, is in every iota of its substance absolutely and infallibly true."<sup>6</sup> He certainly held no such view ten years later. What had taken place in the interval?

In the *Memoir* just cited Dr. Broadus informs us that Dr. Toy had entered on his Seminary career with the idea that it was important to harmonize Scripture references to physical phenomena with the results of physical science, and had tried various methods, but without satisfactory results. In Greenville under the influence of Darwin's work he gave a popular lecture on the origin of man. He had also become profoundly interested in the Biblical researches of Kuenen and Wellhausen. "Near the end of the first session at Louisville it became known to his colleagues that Dr. Toy was teaching views in conflict with the full inspiration and accuracy of the Old Testament writings. By inquiry of him it was learned that he had gone very far in the adoption and varied application of the evolutionary theories above indicated. Dr. Boyce was not only himself opposed, most squarely and strongly, to all such views, but he well knew that nothing of that kind could be taught in the Seminary without doing violence to its aims and objects, and giving the gravest offence to its supporters in general" (*Memoir*, p. 261). At the request of President Boyce, Dr. Broadus tried to persuade Dr. Toy to let "theoretical questions alone, and teach the students what they needed," that is, instruction in "the Old Testament history as it stands." Dr. Broadus reports that Dr. Toy promised to do this, and that he tried faithfully the next season to keep the promise. But "as the session went on, he frankly stated that he found it impossible to leave out those inquiries, or abstain from teaching the opinions he held." Dr. Toy

<sup>6</sup> John A. Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, New York, 1893. P. 211.

decided to lay a statement of his views before the Seminary trustees' meeting at Atlanta in May, 1879 (in connection with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention), and "in order to relieve the Board from restraints of delicacy, he tendered his resignation."<sup>7</sup>

The resignation was almost unanimously accepted, but "the regret at this necessity was universal and profound," because "Dr. Toy had shown himself not only a remarkable scholar and a most honorable and lovable gentleman, but also a very able and inspiring teacher, and a colleague with whom, as to all personal relations, it was delightful to be associated." Elsewhere Broadus wrote on May 10: "The mournful deed is done. . . . Toy's resignation is accepted. . . . We have lost our jewel of learning, our beloved and noble brother, the pride of the Seminary."<sup>8</sup> As evidence of the high character of all concerned in this painful affair, it may be stated that the personal relations continued to be warm and friendly to the end of life. Dr. Toy accepted the decision without

<sup>7</sup> It seems not unlikely that the episode of the Sunday School Times had something to do with Dr. Toy's resignation. Though not mentioned by Dr. Broadus, this episode must have made him and Dr. Boyce anxious lest the Seminary should become involved in suspicion of heterodoxy, a suspicion which, for a variety of reasons, they would be loth to have it bear. In the light of subsequent events it is now evident that this anxiety was not without foundation. But to the incident itself: In the first half of 1878 and 1879 the Sunday School lessons were based on selected portions of the Old Testament, and Dr. Toy furnished weekly to the Sunday School Times an article under the title "Critical Notes." In 1879 the lessons published in the issues of April 12 and 19 were based on Isaiah 42 1-10 and 53 1-12. In the first of these passages Dr. Toy held that "servant" of verse 1 means, as elsewhere in the book, Israel. In regard to Isaiah 53 he held that the subject is still the same. "The reference is throughout to Israel immediately, with a final complete fulfilment in the Messiah." The Christian Intelligencer, an organ of the Reformed Church in America, scented danger in these articles, and on April 24, denounced Dr. Toy and the Sunday School Times in unmeasured terms. The Sunday School Times in an editorial on May 10, for the benefit of those of its readers "who may have been misled by the hasty and erroneous statements of the Christian Intelligencer," shows that Dr. Toy's interpretation of Isaiah 53 is not heretical but is held by other reputable Biblical scholars. Dr. Toy's last "Critical Note" was in the issue of May 24. For two or three weeks after that date the critical articles appear with no name attached. The selections then passed from the Old Testament to the New.

<sup>8</sup> Robertson, Life. P. 313.

reproaches or bitterness, supported by the consciousness of rectitude, and by that catholic, philosophic spirit which never failed him in any crisis.

When it became known that the resignation had been accepted by the trustees, some of the delegates to the Convention, former students of Dr. Toy, urged him to lay the matter before the Convention, assuring him of their cordial support. But he politely declined to enter into any controversy. Referring to this incident, one of the members of that Convention has recently written of Dr. Toy as follows: "The spirit of Dr. Toy was always pacific. In him was more light than heat. He relied upon the sweet reasonableness of his statements of belief, and disdained the arts of the rhetorician or the debater. Not a word of unkindness did he speak of his adversaries, who sometimes, swayed by the *odium theologicum*, forgot the amenities of discussion. Dr. Toy was central peace at the heart of universal agitation. Nothing disturbed his splendid poise. Calmly he faced withdrawal from the tenderest associations and friendships of his life, sustained by the strength of his trust in God. He went out like Abraham, not knowing whither he went, but assured of divine leadership."

In the letter of resignation (published in the *Religious Herald*, Richmond, Va., Dec. 11, 1879) Dr. Toy affirms his unequivocal acceptance of the Seminary doctrine, that the Scriptures were given by inspiration. But as to the method, he says, we must examine the writings themselves. We may hold to no *a priori* theory. In science, in history, in prophecy, there are obvious errors in the Scripture. These, however, concern the shell, not the kernel, of religious truth. The Bible is wholly divine and wholly human. The Biblical writers received divine truth into their souls, which they then expressed in a natural, human way. Dr. Toy considers this view not only lawful to teach in the Seminary but "one that will

bring aid and firm standing ground to many a perplexed mind, and establish the truth of God on a firm foundation."

For a couple of years after the resignation there was not a little excitement throughout the South. Dr. Toy was the theme of much discussion in the denominational press. The *Religious Herald* published at least eight editorials on the subject of Inspiration. Dr. Toy contributed to this paper and to the *Baptist Courier* of South Carolina several articles in elucidation of the views expressed in his letter of resignation. Needless to say, these were all objective, expressed with the calm and confidence of one who knows.

Dr. Toy's work at the Seminary was not limited to his formal teaching. I have noted that it was his delight to guide his students to independent reading and research. He led them likewise into charming and instructive by-ways, as in a course of lectures on the fine arts, among which he included dancing. In commenting some days later on the death of John the Baptist, Dr. Broadus remarked to his class, "See what the dance of a silly girl led to." One of the students interrupted the speaker with, "But, Dr. Broadus, Dr. Toy told us the other day that dancing is a fine art." The lecturer replied, "Brother Toy may, but I don't."

From the Seminary period date several elaborate contributions to the *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, on Hebrew and on Yoruban philology. The translation and enlargement of the Lange commentary on Samuel (in collaboration with Dr. Broadus) likewise belongs to this period.

Dr. Toy was for three years my favorite teacher in the Seminary, and I had intended remaining a fourth year for study with him. The summer following his resignation, and as a result of it, I went to Germany to continue there the pursuit of those studies which I had begun with him. Through letters he continued his kindly office of

guide and adviser. I am venturing to quote from some of these letters because they show his mind on a variety of topics, and make several references to the Seminary experience and to the doctrine of the Inspiration of the Scriptures.

First from a letter written before my going abroad:

“ With a critical knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, ability to read German and French fluently, and habits of scientific investigation, you can doubtless work out theology for yourself. In so far as theology is the statement of Biblical teaching, it is absolutely dependent on exegesis, and in so far as it leaves exegesis, it depends on other sciences. . . . We may be sure that no harm will come from upholding truth, and I am quite sure that the O. T. hermeneutical principles that I have taught are true, and will make their way ” (Norfolk, June 14, 1879).

To learn German he advises to keep aloof from those who speak English and to associate as much as possible with Germans. Dash

“ boldly at talk, careless of mistakes and inadequacies; timidity in talking is the great obstacle to learning a strange language.” Regarding music: “ If possible, get instruction in music, the principles of harmony and the practice of vocalization; and after a while get a short history of music, learn the names and lives of composers and the character of their works and the history of the development of the science.” When he wrote, he had been about two weeks in New York. “ I have no official engagements, but shall do such work as offers itself in the line of Shemitic languages and Biblical exegesis. I have not yet got under way, and cannot say that I have any definite plan, but something will no doubt work itself out ” (New York, October 18, 1879).

“ Franz Delitzsch is ultra conservative, and his spirit and method are not good. He is afraid of the Bible and afraid of science. Some of his commentary work . . . is excellent. But when he gets into theology or, what is worse, pseudo religious philosophy (as the psychology of the Bible) that bizarre, resultless jumble of religion and science, he is weak and misleading. . . . At present I am living very quietly, writing an occasional article for a newspaper, and doing a little work for the *Independent* of this city. Some of the younger men of the South are pushing their inquiries into the Inspiration of

the Scriptures. There is . . . a spirit of inquiry among our people. The trouble is that they have not the necessary knowledge of the facts, and the knowledge cannot be acquired except by steady and long-continued work" (New York, Feb. 23, 1880).

"This question of Inspiration is a broad and deep one, and it will do you no harm to ponder it quietly for some time, before you commit yourself definitely and go into the heat of the conflict. And, about the conflict itself. I am unfriendly to controversy, as it is usually carried on. Though a man may be honest and true, it puts him into a frame of mind unfavorable to the pursuit of pure truth. My advice to you is to keep out of it, if possible — to be categorical or dogmatic rather than controversial. When you get back to America, there will be plenty of opportunity to speak out, and it may require determination and skill, and above all, quiet conviction, intellectual and spiritual repose, to keep out of sharp controversy. But I would take the liberty to urge two things on you: first, do not put yourself into a position where you will be gagged — that will destroy your mental symmetry and your satisfaction in life; prefer to starve rather than take a place where you must stifle or conceal your honest convictions; and then, in announcing and enforcing your opinions, choose the method of positive, categorical exhibition, such a method as you would use with a child to whom you wished to explain. Of course this may not always be possible, but it will in nine cases out of ten. Have your scheme well worked out, and expound it in the spirit of a philosopher, a lover of truth, without attacking other people's opinions. The surest way of destroying error is to teach truth, and that is the only way to reach the people, who as a rule don't understand arguments. Teach after the manner of the Sermon on the Mount. . . . I suppose I shall be in this city for several months to come. I am still writing for the *Independent* newspaper, and have other matters in hand. At a recent meeting of the Oriental Society in Boston, I read a short paper on Noun-inflection in Sabeian (Himyaritic), and I shall probably read something at the meeting of the American Philological Association at Philadelphia next July" (New York, May 29, 1880).

Before the next letter Dr. Toy had accepted a call to Harvard University as Hancock Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental Languages and Dexter Lecturer on Biblical Literature. Referring to this position he wrote from Cambridge, September 30, 1880, "I begin work tomorrow

under fairly favorable circumstances." In the same letter he says of an article by Rev. Dr. Bartlett, which had been submitted to me as a test of my own views, "I don't wonder that you couldn't subscribe to Bartlett's views; they not only defy exegesis, but muzzle thought."

In connection with Dr. Toy's election to Harvard, Dr. Broadus wrote "a most cordial recommendation, with the explanation that Dr. Toy's leaving the Seminary was due to nothing whatever but his holding views like those of Kuenen and Wellhausen."<sup>9</sup> Writing from New Jersey to me on August 3, 1880, Dr. Broadus says, "I hope to see Toy before the week closes. You know he has been appointed Professor of Hebrew and other Shemitic Languages at Harvard. I had the great satisfaction of laying myself out on a letter to the appointers. I am persuaded he will do great things there for Shemitic Philology." Dr. Toy held the Lectureship till 1903, and the Professorship till 1909, when he became Professor Emeritus. After his resignation he continued the work of research with his wonted enthusiasm, and produced one of his most noteworthy books.

When Dr. Toy came to Harvard, a Semitic Department did not exist. Of Semitic languages only Hebrew was offered. In his first year he added Aramaic, and gave a course of "evening readings" on the Arabic Poets. The next year he gave similar readings on the Book of Job. The addition of a new member to the Department in 1882 made a division of labor and an increase of the Semitic offerings possible. There followed a succession of assistants, and, for longer or shorter periods, of other instructors, with the result that for many years Harvard has offered elementary and advanced instruction in all the leading Semitic tongues, and courses on the history, literature, and religion of the more important Semitic peoples. Dr. Toy gave instruction in Hebrew, Aramaic,

<sup>9</sup> Broadus, *Memoir*. P. 264.

Arabic, Ethiopic, the Talmud, general Semitic grammar, history of Israel, religion of Israel, Old Testament introduction, quotations from the Old Testament, criticism of the Pentateuch and of Chronicles, constitution of Genesis, the Spanish califate, and the Bagdad califate. "From the nature of his material his class room attracted thoughtful and earnest students, but never considerable numbers. His instruction was characterized by fulness and accuracy of learning, orderly arrangement, comprehensiveness and lucidity of statement. His aim was always, however, less to impart knowledge than to quicken the mind of his pupils, to indicate sources and methods, to guide into the ways of research and productivity."

As lecturer Dr. Toy's utterance was measured and easy, always compact with thought, always choice in expression. He inclined to the conversational style, and encouraged the asking of questions. His manner towards students was deferential and considerate, almost paternal. He never put one of them to shame by irony or rebuke, however strong the temptation may have been. The urbanity of the well-bred gentleman never forsook him. Such considerateness he manifested indeed towards all men, especially to such as were in need. What endless hours he gave to those who submitted their manuscripts to him for criticism! How many in theological or ecclesiastical difficulty brought their troubles to him, and found relief in his sympathy and advice! It was his view that a man should not necessarily change ecclesiastical connections because of difference of opinion. He remained a member of the Baptist Church for nearly eight years after coming to Cambridge. Then he withdrew and joined the Unitarian Church. But he was never an ecclesiastical partisan in the old relation or the new. Nor was he an iconoclast. For this his temper was too judicial, and he was able to see a subject in too many of its bearings.



On coming to Harvard Dr. Toy's great learning was promptly recognized by his colleagues. Perhaps it is no exaggeration to say that they regarded him as the most widely informed member of the Faculty. His acquisitiveness for languages was insatiable. It led him to take up Sanskrit, which he taught to one of his Greenville associates, Persian, Assyrian, Egyptian, and Russian. He was profoundly versed in literatures, ancient and modern, and found time to keep informed on the stream of works constantly issuing from the press. The only criticism I ever heard as to his knowledge came from his laundress, who once said: "Dr. Toy don't know nothing. He don't know how to sew on a button." In the use of tools and machinery he was singularly inexpert.

Dr. Toy was the first scholar not a Unitarian to become professor in the Harvard Divinity School. His appointment was but a first step of many which have resulted in making that school the centre of a group of affiliated Seminaries, including Andover, which more than a century ago was founded as a protest against "Harvard theology." He was not only teacher but served in other capacities. He was a member of the Harvard Library Council and of the administrative board of the Graduate School. Outside the University he held office in various learned societies. He served on the editorial staff of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and as president of the American Oriental Society and the American Philological Association. But no man ever set less value on honors of this class than did he, as one may see from the meagre account of him in *Who's Who in America*. The same remark applies to the degrees received from institutions of learning — D.D. from Wake Forest College, LL.D. from Howard College, University of North Carolina, and Harvard University.

For my first six years in Cambridge it was my good fortune to live with Dr. Toy, and to have the friendship

of earlier years ripen into intimacy, which I prize among my most precious memories. In conversation his plans for work and publication were a favorite topic, and he was always interested to hear of the intellectual work of others. But regarding his experiences, achievements, honors, he was singularly uncommunicative. This reticence was due to a self-abnegating quality of soul, as beautiful as it is rare. He was regular and methodical in his daily routine, went but little into society, worked late at night, slept well, and ate well, but could go all day without food if he could but have his pipe.

Dr. Toy spent three sabbatical years abroad, the first in 1887-88. At the end of this year he was married at Norfolk, on May 24, 1888, to Nancy Saunders, daughter of Rev. Dr. Robert Milton Saunders.

Dr. Toy was the prime mover in the founding of the Conversation Club in Louisville, and at Harvard he founded three organizations for intellectual ends. The first of these is the Biblical Club. Early in 1881, not long after his arrival on the scene, he invited a small group of scholars to meet at his room in Wadsworth House, and there was formed the Harvard Semitic Club, which had for its object the study of the Old Testament in the original tongues and in the versions. Not long after, the name was changed to the Harvard Biblical Club, and the New Testament was included as an object of study. Dr. Toy was the first and only president, except in his sabbatical years abroad, when a substitute was temporarily chosen. This election year after year was in recognition of his learning and fairmindedness. The club has always included most of the Biblical teachers in the Protestant theological schools in and about Boston.

A year or two later he founded the club of graduate students and undergraduates known at first as the Semitic Seminar, then as the Semitic Seminary, and finally as the Semitic Conference. In the selection of subjects to be in-

vestigated and presented to the club, Dr. Toy was always inspiration and guide.

The Harvard Club for the Study of the History of Religions came into being in Dr. Toy's study in the autumn of 1891. This Club comprises a small group of Harvard instructors and an occasional member from the outside. Dr. Toy's chief interest during the later years of his life was the broad field of religion, and he was rarely happier than in the monthly meetings of this group of congenial friends. The Club has no elected officers, but Dr. Toy kept the record as long as he was able to attend the meetings, and by unanimous consent he was always looked up to as the president. When he completed twenty-five years of service at Harvard this Club celebrated the event by a dinner and the presentation of a handsome silver cigar case engraved with the initials of the members. In 1912, in connection with several of his friends and former pupils, the Club published in his honor a volume, *Studies in the History of Religions*, as a belated commemoration of his seventy-fifth birthday (March 23, 1911).

The space allotted to this article is already so nearly exhausted that only the briefest account of Professor Toy's publications can be given. Before coming to Harvard he published a life of Rev. Dr. R. B. C. Howell, and as we have seen, an American edition of the Lange commentary on the Books of Samuel. In 1882 appeared the *History of the Religion of Israel, an Old Testament Primer*. This is a clear and concise presentation of the leading facts from the modern point of view, with such account of the political history and of the literature as the nature of the subject required. *Quotations in the New Testament*, 1884, is intended to show how the expounders of the new religious movement deal with the sacred books of their nation, what is their method of interpretation, how they understand the instructions, exhortations, and predic-

tions of the past, how they fit the old order of things into the new. The discussion of hermeneutical principles (pp. xxi ff.) is reverent but plain-spoken. It points out that the New Testament writers, while in many respects superior to their contemporaries, were yet, in the ordinary processes of thinking, men of their times. The rabbis, though profoundly reverent, pursued "an unhistorical, unscientific mode of studying" the Scripture. Historical criticism and exegesis were sciences not yet born. A passage was taken literally or allegorically according to the need of the interpreter. So with the New Testament writers, whose method is in general that of the Talmud, only "more cautious and reserved."

Perhaps Dr. Toy's most important book is *Judaism and Christianity, a Sketch of the Progress of Thought from Old Testament to New Testament* (1890). The Introduction discusses in a comprehensive, philosophic way the general laws of advance from national to universal religions. The eight chapters of the work deal successively with the literature, the doctrine of God, subordinate supernatural beings, man, ethics, the kingdom of God, eschatology, and the relation of Jesus to Christianity. In regard to Jesus, Dr. Toy sees in the New Testament several diverse views: the Jewish, in the Synoptic Gospels; the Pauline, in the writings of the Apostle; and the Alexandrian, resulting from the union of Greek philosophical speculation with Jewish theology, in the Fourth Gospel. But in spite of this diversity and of all subsequent changes, the person of Jesus has been central in religious life. "Whatever the particular construction of theology, whether he be regarded as substantially divine or only as a profoundly inspired man, whether Church or Bible be accepted as infallible guide, he is ever the leader and model of religious experience." "The fundamental truths which he announced are as new as they were in his time." The great themes of this remarkable volume are treated in

Dr. Toy's best manner, with fulness of learning, careful discriminations, sympathy, spiritual poise, elevation of thought, and in a style simple, clear, and eloquent. The story is told with so much life and so convincingly that the reader feels himself to be actually contemporary with the events recorded. Only a profound student and thinker could produce such a work.

*Introduction to the History of Religions* (1913) is Dr. Toy's last book, and shows him at his best in the range of the inquiry, the accuracy and minuteness of the research. The object of the book is "to describe the principal customs and ideas that underlie all public religion." While the work is devoted to primitive religions, "references to the higher religions are introduced for the purpose of illustrating lines of progress." The thought is clear but condensed. No useless word is allowed, and fact crowds relentlessly on fact. The vast mass of material, bewildering in its complexity, is reduced to order, and the common bond that underlies widely diverse custom and ceremonial is brought to light.

Dr. Toy published three critical exegetical books on the Old Testament, all in 1899. They are: *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel. Critical Edition of the Hebrew Text, with Notes*; *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel. A New English Translation, with Explanatory Notes and Pictorial Illustrations*; and *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Proverbs*. For the production of such works Dr. Toy had in an eminent degree the necessary qualifications, fulness of learning, patience, poise, sanity of judgment, a keen critical faculty, a clear and logical mind, the power to grasp and state the essential thought, brevity of statement, and felicity of expression.

Doubtless there would be many more volumes to the credit of Dr. Toy, had he not devoted so much attention to editorial work and to contributions published in encyclopædias, magazines, and journals. A partial list,

prepared by Dr. Harry A. Wolfson, is given in *Studies in the History of Religions*, mentioned above. From the foundation of *The New World* he was one of the editors (1892–1900). Besides his editorial labors he contributed to this magazine six learned articles and seventy-four book reviews. He was a member of the editorial board of the *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1901–1906), contributing to all of the twelve volumes, and having charge of the departments of Hebrew Philology and Hellenistic Literature. He contributed to about twenty journals, both technical and literary, to some of them many times. To the *Harvard Theological Review* he contributed two elaborate articles, one on Pan-Babylonianism, and one on the Islam of the Koran. If space allowed, it would be rewarding to examine some of these contributions. One at least may be mentioned — the Dudleian Lecture for 1899, published in the *Christian Register* for January 18, 1900. The subject, Pope Leo XIII, lies in a controverted field, but is handled with such breadth, wealth of learning, and conclusiveness, that the positions taken by the lecturer are incontrovertible.

This is but an imperfect sketch of Dr. Toy's life and work. Those who knew him well will not fail, I hope, to recognize the sketch as true, so far as it goes. But beyond and above these life-incidents was the man himself. To characterize him as man I venture to quote from the minute prepared by three of his colleagues who had been his pupils, and published in the *Harvard University Gazette* for June 14, 1919.

“Dr. Toy was a cultivated gentleman of the old Southern type, courtly, considerate, deferential, sympathetic. His wide reading and his many-sided learning, in archaeology, history, language, literature, theology, religion, music, politics, and philosophy, made him a centre in any group, and notably in circles of scholars of kindred interests.

“He had a boundless passion for learning, great industry in the pursuit of it, the power of severe and sustained application. Through

a retentive memory he had always at command the great stores of learning which he had gathered by wide reading in many languages. Not less marked were his courage, both physical and moral, his imperturbable poise, his complete freedom from self-seeking, his catholicity of spirit, his geniality of speech and manner, his quiet and inoffensive humor. His temper was judicial, his discriminations keen, his judgments sane. In criticism he was kindly and just, in statement clear, in expression felicitous. He was always interested in younger scholars, and to this interest age brought no abatement.

“ Dr. Toy was essentially an investigator and pioneer. His studies in Biblical Science and in Religions and his frankness of utterance mark the beginning of a new epoch in American scholarship. Yet he seemed altogether unconscious of his own greatness. With all his learning and honors he was at heart as simple and guileless as a child. He belongs in the class of the sages of olden time. He followed after wisdom, and received the fulfilment of her promise, ‘ Length of days, and years of life, and peace.’ ”